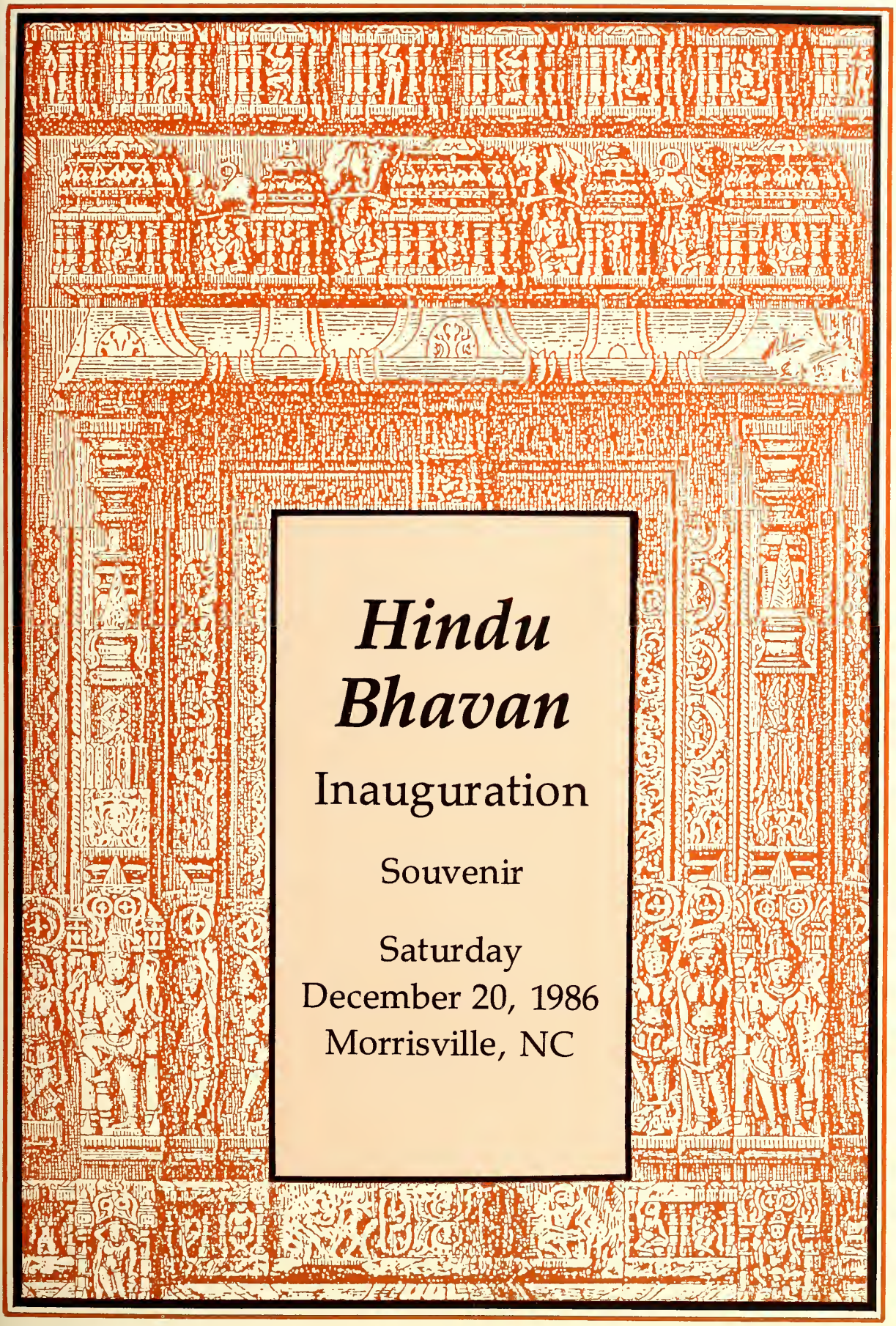


Hindu Bhavan

Inauguration

Souvenir

Saturday
December 20, 1986
Morrisville, NC

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय।
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय॥

From delusion lead me to Truth,
From darkness lead me to light,
From death lead me to immortality.

Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad 1, 3, 28





PROGRAM

Saturday, December 20, 1986 5-8 P.M.

Devasthan Opening
by Swami Bhasyananda

Arati (worship) of:
Shri Ganesh , Lord Shiva, Devi Sarasvati, Ma Amba,
Shri Ramachandra, Mahavir Swami, Balaji, Hanumanji
and Radha-Krishna.

Welcoming Address:
Mrs. Saroj Sharma,
President, The Hindu Society.

Remarks by Past Presidents:
Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma
Dr. Devendra Garg
Dr. Bhupender S. Gupta
Dr. Arvind Shah

Meditation & Peace of Mind:
Talk by Acharya Sushil Muni

Keynote Address:
Swami Bhasyananda.

Vote of Thanks

Prasad (Dinner).

A Dream Becomes Reality

Hindu Bhavan is a dream that took root a decade ago when a group of Indians in the Research Triangle area seeking to strengthen their ties to one another, to their religion, and to their cultural heritage, formed the Hindu Society of North Carolina. In the early years the members of the Society met in the basements of private houses, or in rented halls, for religious festivals or group prayers (*sat-sanga, kirtan, katha-vachan*, etc.). Their number was under one hundred and the prayer sessions never attracted more than a few dozen people at one time. Although these temporary quarters served their purpose well, the lack of a permanent and more spacious home (Bhavan) soon became a serious impediment to the growth of the Society. In fact, the number of members declined gradually from 99 in 1977 to 85 in 1980.

With prayerful determination, the search for a "home" was begun and finally led to an old building on 214 Ashe Avenue in Raleigh. Although in a rather dilapidated condition, the price tag of $40,000 was high for the meager resources of the Society. However, there was no turning back; with generous donations from the members and personal guarantees by some members of the Board of Directors, the building was purchased in December 1980, opening its doors to the community in January 1981. Thus the first Hindu Bhavan in Research Triangle was born – the cherished dream became a reality.

This historic event proved a turning point in the history of the Society. Thereafter the membership rose dramatically from 101 in 1981 to about 400 in 1985, (currently standing at about 500). The Ashe Avenue Bhavan, bought with so much enthusiasm and faith, had room only for about 200 people and could not accommodate ensuing unprecedented growth in membership. But dreams begot dreams: a new aspiration was born – for a bigger and better facility.

The next step was to undertake a drive to raise funds for a new building. In addition to making personal monetary donations, members now contributed time and talents by arranging fundraising events such as dances, concerts, bazaars and festivals. (Donations are acknowledged elsewhere in this brochure.) Some members once again offered themselves as personal guarantors for bank loans. In September 1984 the perseverance and foresight of the working body of the Society and its members resulted in the ultimate purchase of a six-acre plot in Morrisville, at the cost of $70,000. The dream was now in the hands of the dreamers; they were ready to shape its reality.

The Bhavan's transfer from Ashe Avenue to Morrisville was not an easy one. Design of the building was not just a matter of space accommodation. The blueprint of the building would have to be flexible enough to satisfy every shade of opinion among the members, who sought to bring the rich diversity of its Indian heritage to the new home. Arriving at consensus on almost every issue, from the specific floor plans to selection of the *murtis* (idols) of chosen gods and their sizes, to the choice of building materials, took the form of endless debate. However, the final decisions were always reached in a spirit of harmony.

The Bhavan is much more than the simple structure it appears. It is a reminder of a precious heritage, a symbol evoking the Hindu spirit. The temple is a "living thread", it was noted by one – a "thread leading back to India." And it is a thread which may be perceived and followed by our children. Today we witness the fruition of the dream that the Hindu community in this area nourished and empowered ten years ago.

– Saroj Sharma,
President
The Hindu Society of North Carolina









From Ashe Avenue to Morrisville

1. First Bhavan on Ashe Ave. Raleigh. 2. Members displaying the blue print of the new Bhavan are: (from left) Balraj Aggarwal, Narendra Khosla, HarshadPadia, Kirshor Trivedi, Saroj Sharma, Arvind Shah. 3. Swami Swadeshananda at the groundbreaking ceremony. Others seen in the picture are: (from left) Harish Buch, Saroj Sharma, G. D. Sharma, Sachi Sharma, Purnima Agrawal, Nisha Padia and Uma Balachandran (some are unidentified). 4. Groundbreaking ceremony of the new Bhavan at Morrisville. Some of those who can be identified are: Arvind Shah, Harshad Padia, Jagdish Bhandari, Saroj Sharma, Lingamoorthy, and Kishor Trivedi.



The Hindu Society of North Carolina

The Hindu Society of North Carolina is the culmination of the efforts of a small group of Indians which congregated at the house of Dr. and Mrs. Ganga Dhar Sharma in Raleigh prior to the incorporation of the Society. This group consisted of about a dozen people who met informally, once or twice a month, for Gita path (study and recitation of Gita), Satyanarayan katha (telling of didactic tales from Hindu mythology relating to Bhagavan Satyanarayan and other gods) and Kirtan (group singing of hymns). Members of the group then began to meet more frequently at each others' houses. As the number increased, they decided to form a society with the object of providing a forum for the Hindu community in the Triangle and in neighboring towns, for religious and cultural enhancement.

On September 8, 1976, at the initiative of Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma, about twenty people gathered at his house and enthusiastically endorsed the idea of forming a society. At this meeting they also elected a working board of directors consisting of the following: Dr. R. K. De, Mr. Mool Raj Mathur (Vice President), Dr. Naren Tambe, Dr. Man Mohan Sawhney, Dr. Arvind Shah, Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma (President), and Dr. Mansukh C.Wani.

Upon a petition signed jointly by Dr. Sharma and Mr. Mathur, the Hindu Society was incorporated in the State of North Carolina, on September 16, 1976, as a non-profit organizaion. The location of the Society during the four years between 1976 and 1980 was transitory; meetings were hosted at a variety of places. Finally, in December 1980, the Society bought its own home—Hindu Bhavan—on Ashe Avenue in Raleigh. The membership of the Society increased from 72 in 1976 to about 500 in late 1986.

Opportunities for cultural expression have taken diverse forms. The festivals complete with Indian cuisine, are ample. Each year the major programs include: Ganesh Chaturthi, Pongal, Sarasvati puja, Durga puja, Janmashtami, Mahavir puja, Holi, Divali. Perhaps the climax of each year is the annual convention. Over the last five years prominent religious figures and scholars have addressed these meetings: Swami Parthasarathi, Swami Swadeshananda, Swami Bhasyananda, Brahmacharini Pavitra Devi, Acharya Sushil Muni and Professor Tuli from the University of West Virginia. This annual event is a celebration lasting the entire day and a dance performance, songs and food highlight the festivities.

Fund-raising events are always cultural and have taken the form of bazaars, dances, music concerts, and sponsorship of a booth at the North Carolina State Fair. A concert by the renowned Indian singer Anup Jalota, a dance performance by Amala Shankar, and an Indian bazaar in Chapel Hill organized by Dr. Sagar Jain, and recent participation in the International Fair at Raleigh, are a sampling of the events in the Hindu Society's wide repertoire.







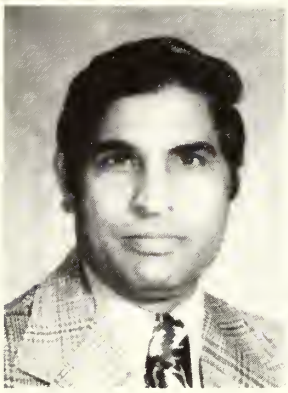


1. Garba performance by the Gujarati dance group. 2. Guest speakers are a regular feature of the Society's activities. 3. Dr. G. D. Sharma performing *puja* at Dr. & Mrs. R. K. De's house. 4. Swami Bhasyananda speaking on Vedanta at the Society's annual convention.

An important theme underlying most activities of the Hindu Society is that of encouragement of the new generation. The Society is a source which the youth of the community can utilize in a number of ways. Since 1982 the Society has organized a youth camp where children are provided with opportunities to familiarize themselves with their heritage and strengthen their faith. Since 1985, youth group activities have been a mainstay for the family in the Society. In addition, classes in Hindi are offered to Bal Mandal (children's group), and plans for a library are being made.

Since its inception, the Hindu Society has always striven to move forward into the future, and the construction of the Morrisville Bhavan is a major step. Here we will gather together to maintain our historic unity with our unique heritage.

Presidents of the Hindu Society: 1976-1986



Dr. G. D. Sharma



Dr. Devendra Garg



Dr. Arvind Shah



Dr. Bhupender Gupta

Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma

Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma, popularly called "Sharmaji," is a pioneer of religious revival among the Hindus of the Triangle area and a source of inspiration to the Hindu community in North Carolina in general. For several years Dr. Sharma's house was synonymous with the Hindu Society. Indeed he acted as *de facto* priest of the Hindu community. He is on call almost seven days a week to perform ritualistic ceremonies in the Hindu homes. Whether it be the birth of a baby, marriage ceremony, house-warming, or a tragedy in the community, no ceremony is complete without Sharmaji.

As has been noted elsewhere in this brochure, Dr. Sharma is the founding President of the Hindu Society. He was the convenor of the first organizational meeting of the Society in the fall of 1976. Since then he has served twice as the President (1976-1980 and 1982). Prior to the purchase of the first Hindu Bhavan, his house was the administrative base of the Society. He was one of the personal guarantors of the Bhavan's mortgages in 1980 and 1986.

Dr. Sharma was born in Shikohabad (Uttar Pradesh), India. He earned his M.S. in Zoology from the Agra University in 1950. He went to Canada in 1959 and studied at McGill University, graduating with a Master's degree in Entomology in 1962. He received his Ph. D. in 1964 from McGill.

In 1965 he left India for a teaching assignment at the University of Ife in Ibadan, Nigeria and stayed there for two years. From 1967 to 1972 he worked in Khartoum as an UNESCO advisor to the Government of Sudan. Since moving to Raleigh in 1972 Dr. Sharma has taught as a science teacher in various schools in North Carolina, his longest service being at the Governor Morehead School from 1974 to 1984. Early this year he retired from Zebulon High School. He has authored about two dozen articles and three high school textbooks in areas of zoology and botany.

He has been a member of the Lions Club of Raleigh since 1978, now serving as Vice-President. Dr. Sharma and his wife, Saroj Sharma, the current president of the Hindu Society live in Raleigh. They have five children and three grandchildren.

Dr. Devendra P. Garg

Dr. Devendra P. Garg has been one of the most committed members of the Hindu Society ever since its inception. He initiated various fund-raising activities for purchase of the first Bhavan of the Society. Also he was one of the personal guarantors of the Bhavan's mortgage. He and his wife, Prabha Garg, have hosted Society's annual *Yajna* at their house in Durham for several years. He has served as a member on the Board of Directors of the Society from 1978

to 1979, Vice-President in 1980 and President in 1981.

Born in Roorkee, India, Dr. Garg completed his undergraduate education at Agra and Roorkee Universities. In 1959 he joined the University of Wisconsin, receiving his M.S. in mechanical engineering in 1960. After a short stay in India he came back to U.S. in 1964 and graduated from New York University with a Ph. D. in 1969.

He has taught in various capacities at Roorkee University, M.I.T. and New York University. He joined Duke University in 1972 as Professor of Mechanical Engineering and also since 1977 has served as Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Material Science. He is a member of several key committees at Duke. He also holds membership and office in over a dozen national and international professional organizations.

Dr. Garg is recepient of several awards, notably T.C.M. Merit Scholar, University of Wisconsin, New York University's Founder's Day Award for Outstanding Scholastic Achievement, Sigma XI, New York Chapter, Pi Tau Sigma, New York University Chapter; Order of Saint Patrick, Duke University Chapter. He has authored two books and published (individually or co-authored) over 100 papers and has written many technical reports.

He lives in Durham with his wife, Prabha and has two daughters—Seema and Nisha.

Dr. Arvind Shah

One of the founding members of the Board of Directors of the Hindu Society, Dr. Arvind Shah has been an ardent supporter of the Society for the past ten years. He has served in various capacities; as Board Member in 1976-1977, 1982; as Vice President in 1979, President in 1983, and a special advisor. He played a significant role in raising funds for the old and the new Bhavans, being one of the personal guarantors of the loans both in 1980 and 1986. He and his wife, Bina Shah, have been very generous, both with their time and money, in helping the Society in its most critical hour. It was during his term that the Indian community in the Triangle area was surveyed to establish the need for the new Bhavan and the plans for purchasing the land were approved.

Dr. Shah was born in Bodal (Gujarat), India. He earned his B.S. in electrical engineering from Baroda University in 1960. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1962 as a student at Syracuse University and received his M.S. in electrical engineering in 1963. He graduated with a Ph. D. in the electromegnetic field from the North Carolina State University in 1971.

He joined IBM in 1963 in Binghampton, NY and transferred to the Research Triangle office of the company in 1969. Currently he serves as one of the Product Managers with IBM, in charge of the European market. He has received a number of awards for outstanding job performance and has published several papers in the area of his specialization—computer hardware design. Dr. Shah, his wife Bina, and their two children—Sanjay and Nilam—live in Cary.

Dr. Bhupender S. Gupta

Dr. Bhupender S. Gupta is one of the founding members of the Hindu Society and has served it in various capacities: Member of the Board of Directors 1977-1978, Vice-President 1982-1983, President 1984; and a special advisor. During his term the Society bought 6,000 acres of land at Morrisville on which the present Bhavan stands. He and his wife, Vasudha Gupta, have been deeply involved in the activities of the Society right from the beginning. They have contributed liberally and in 1980 stood as guarantors for the first Bhavan.

He grew up in a home in which the Hindu religion governed the mode of daily life. He owes his knowledge of Vedic literature to the family tradition in Sanskrit learning. Both his grandfathers were scholars of Sanskrit and were also the Presidents of Arya Samaj. His mother is now serving in the same capacity in Delhi. Arya Samaj is a reformist Hindu organization advocating a return to the temporal and spiritual authority of the Veda. Although Dr. Gupta has been away from India for about 25 years he has maintained his interest in Vedic literature. He is frequently called upon to give lectures on various aspects of

Hinduism and to perform *Yajna*—Vedic oblation to the fire.

Dr. Gupta was born in Delhi, India. He received his undergraduate education at the Punjab Universtiy in the field of textile technology. He went to England in 1960 and graduated from the Manchester University with a Ph. D. in textile physics. He came to the United States in 1963 and joined North Carolina State University as Assistant Professor in the School of Textiles. A full Professor since 1979, Dr. Gupta is also serving currently as the graduate administrator and the assistant head of the Department of Textile Engineering.

He has published about 70 papers in the fields of structural mechanics of fibers and fibrous assemblies; friction and wear; water and vapor transport; surgical sutures and vascular grafts. He is a member of the American Chemical Society, the Fiber Society, the Textile Institute (Fellow), the Society of Biomedical Materials, the Society of Sigma XI and Phi Kappa Phi.

Dr. Gupta and his wife, Vasudha Gupta, and their three children—Sumedha, Apurv and Anupam, live in Raleigh.



Mrs. Saroj Sharma.

Mrs. Saroj Sharma

As an old saying goes, "Behind every successful man is a woman," but Mrs. Saroj Sharma walks beside her husband, Dr. Ganga Dhar Sharma, and legtitimately shares with him the credit for establishing the Hindu Soceity. As a founding member of the Society she has worked with him and other members to make it a voice of the Hindu Community in this area. She has spent countless hours mobilizing community support for several projects, most importantly, fund-raising for the Hindu Bhavan. She successfully organized benefit programs such as musical concerts and participated in the North Carolina State Fairs. Most recently, she managed a booth in the International Fair at the Civic Center in Raleigh. These and other similar activities not only earned the Indian community visibility, but also most needed funds for the Society. A zealous worker, she acts as a role model for the younger members of the Society.

While abroad with her husband, Mrs. Sharma founded the India Association at McGill Univesity (1963); The India Association in Ibadan, Nigeria (1965); and the India Association and a religious group in Khartoum, Sudan (1967). In Khartoum she also served as secretary and later as vice-president of the International Women's Club for four years. Besides involving with the Hindu Society, she has engaged in fund-raising for such local charities as the Heart Association, the Cancer Association and the Lions Club.

She has been associated with the Hindu Society ever since its formation, serving as vice-president (1981), board member (1984) and president (1985-1986). She has hosted scores of functions of the Society, and has worked with a missionary spirit to bring the dream of Hindu Bhavan to fruition.

She was born in Kanpur, India, and received her Master's degree in Hindi language and literature from Allahabad University in 1957. She is proud mother of five and grandmother of three.

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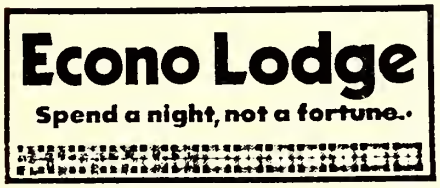


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